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NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia

DRUMS AND SHADOWS

754 "Witches done ride me plenty times.⁶⁰ I spicioned who dey wuz but nebuh could ketch one. Dey alluz tun out tuh be somebody right in yuh neighbuhhood. Yuh kin keep em away by puttin sulphuh roun yuh house aw by placin a knife aw a Bible unduh yuh pilluh.

(789) 789 "Deah's lots uh strange tings dat happen. I seen folks disappeah right fo muh eyes. Jis go right out uh sight. Dey do say dat people brought frum Africa in slabery times could disappeah an fly right back tuh Africa. Frum duh tings I see myself I blieb dat dey could do dis."

763 Ozie Cohen * said that he too saw the spirits of people just before they were about to die.⁵⁹ He told us, "Not long ago a frien uh mine wuz sick. Duh night befo he die I see 774 his spirit floatin long befo me in duh street. Duh nex day 787 he pass away. Eben aftuh some uh muh friens die, I see 789 deah spirits nuff tuh know em.⁶⁰

• 776 "Hags worry me too. I see um slide in frum noweah. I 789 try tuh call out, den all at once I'm hepless an strugglin.⁶⁰ Ef I membuh tuh put a Bible unduh muh pilluh, dey dohn bodduh me.

789 "I hab heahd duh story bout folks flyin back tuh Africa. 754 I tink it mus be true wen I tink bout how witches kin come tru a keyhole tuhday.^{60c}

754 "Yuh heah lots bout roots an fixin.¹⁵ Folks is alluz sayin somebody bin rooted mos anytime somebody git sick fuh a long spell. Den yuh heah dem sayin, duh sickness ain feah. Dey bin rooted."

632 Down one long lane and up another we came upon the two 115 or three-room dwelling of the second mayor, George Boddison,^{**} built on the banks of the old rice canal. Boddison came out of his home to meet us. His wrists and arms were encircled by copper wire strung with good luck charms; * his 789 fingers were covered with several large plain rings. A cop-

* Ozie Cohen, *Tin City*.

** George Boddison, *Tin City*.

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775 right at muh side.⁵³ Ise use tuh um now an it's jis lak
[789] natchul people tuh me. Yuh kin skeah witches an ghos ef
yuh make a cross mahk. Dis will stop um frum followin
yuh."

[115] Seventy-five year old Henry Bates * readily acknowledged
a belief in the supernatural. "I done seen all kine uh strange
ting happen in muh lifetime. Yuh wahn me tuh tell yuh
bout some uh dem ting, missus?

775 "One night I finished eatin dinnuh. Den I walk tuh duh
787 kitchen doe. I see a strange man comin down duh road; he
wuz twenty yahds away. I tun muh head tuh look in duh
house an wen uh look back he done disappeahed. I know he
mustuh been a ghos.⁵⁴

• 776 "Anudduh time I heah a knock on duh doe. I heah it tree
787 times. Bam! Bam! Bam! Wen muh dog heah dat knock,
he holluh lak he wuz sked tuh det. I git up an go tuh duh
doe an muh haiah riz up on muh head. Wen uh gits tuh duh
doe, uh see sumpm as big as a cow, only it look lak a dog.⁵⁴
Den it vanish lak a shadduh.

754 "One night muh wife an me git ready tuh go tuh bed.
787 We fasten duh doe an winduh. Attuh a time we heah a
noise. Den we heah a click. Duh winduh come open jis lak
somebody open it. I strike a match an uh see a big yulluh
cat walkin long side duh bed. It hab a face jis lak a pusson.
It go right out duh winduh.

[776] "I fine out latuh dat duh cat wuz a witch.⁵⁵ Witches is
jis livin people wut bin sole tuh duh debil. Lots uh nights I
kin feel em ridin me. Jis duh udduh day I wuz sittin in a
cheah an I dozed off tuh sleep. All at once a hag jump on
me an staht ridin me.⁵⁵

789 "Wen I wuz a boy I heah lots uh stories bout people flyin.
Some folks brung obuh frum Africa could fly off aw dis-
appeah anytime dey wanted tuh. I alluz belieb dat story.

* Henry Bates, 1118 West Waldbury Street, Currytown.

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(291)
(301) Her age was uncertain; she was gaunt and sickly in appearance. Her outfit consisted of a dull gray waist with a turban to match and a faded blue skirt. Large brass earrings dangled from her ears, making her lean face appear still more woebegone. Certainly there was something wrong with the woman, for she dragged listlessly with the effort of walking the short distance from the house.

We inquired about her health but when we asked about the "cunjuh" which had been put upon her, she looked at us distrustfully, saying, "Muh huzbun tell yuh bout dat." With that she left us abruptly.

(291) Soon the man * appeared, a bent figure in ragged blue overalls, with a battered felt hat on his grizzled head. Unlike his wife, Stephen Bryant was talkative and friendly, and he told us readily of his wife's strange predicament. "She wuz cunjuhed by uh own sistuh," he began. "Some days she all right an kin cook an clean up; den all at once tings git tuh runnin all obuh uh body.⁵ Sometimes she fall down an hab tuh be put tuh bed."

We asked Stephen if he had consulted any root doctors⁴⁸ about his wife's condition and he said, "I hab monuh dozen root doctuhz tuh uh but dey dohn do uh no good. I keep on tryin an maybe some day I fine duh right un tuh reach duh cunjuh."

In this instance retribution seemed to have come swiftly, for Stephen told us that the sister who had caused the conjure was now "laid up uhsef wid cunjuh, fuh someone cas a spell on huh too."

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776 When we asked Stephen if he believed in evil spirits, he nodded in affirmation. "I sees um all duh time," he said. "Dey is lill an wite an hab no head.^{54, 55} Yuh nebul see um till attuh duh sun gone down. Yuh dohn bodduh um none an dey leab yuh lone.

"Deah use tuh be a ole house right pas ours. Ebry night

* Stephen Bryant, Springfield.

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SPRINGFIELD

787 we would be woke up by a loud bangin noise. Ef we look
775 out duh winduh we could see dis spirit. He wuz alluz
• 776 wanduhin roun. Ebry now an den he would tro a rock at a
ole gasoline tank an it would make dat noise we heah.⁵⁵ We
alluz use tuh tink deah wuz buried treasure neah an dis
spirit wuz gahdin it.⁶¹ I nebuh did look fuh duh treasure,
I dohn wahn tuh fool wid no spirits. Attuh a time dey tuk
down duh house an duh spirit nebuh did come back no mo."

754 Another victim of conjure,* a Negro man of about
(115) eighty-eight, told us that although he did not usually believe
754 superstitious tales, his own strange experience had forced
755 him to realize that "folks kin fix yuh." "One time I fall
down sick frum a puhculeyuh disease. Nuttn didn do no
good till uh hab a root uhmun come in. Right away she tell
me a enemy done put down a dose fuh me.¹⁵ She say I wuz
fined in fish. Well, den, she tell me tuh drink a haffuh pint
uh wiskey and tro way duh udduh res uh duh pint. Attuh
uh done dis, uh git well agen.⁶

754 "I knows a case uh fixin right now. It's a young man wut
dohn lib fah frum yuh. He alluz complainin bout crickets
crawlin unduh his skin an some uh duh neighbuhs say dey
see um. I blieb dis mus be so cuz deah's a uhmun roun yuh
wut kin make a han tuh put any kine uh insect in yuh body.⁶
She kill duh insect an grine it tuh powduh an rub it on duh
skin uh duh pusson aw gib it tuh um tuh drink. Wen it
entuh duh body, it tun back intuh insect, sometime a lizud
aw a frawg aw a snake."

791 The old man continued, "Ise had plenty sperience bout
759 root wuk,⁴⁸ but I alluz try tuh keep way frum dat kine uh
folks. I membuh ole Doctuh Sheppard who use tuh op-
purate yuh. He hab hunduds uh folks come tuh him day an
night. He mustuh been bery good.

"Deah wuz a uhmun name Clara an she wuz good too.
She use tuh ketch lots uh Doctuh Sheppard's customuhs. I

* Charles Singleton, Springfield.

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754 uh people. Deah so much debilment in ole Uncle John
Bowen dat finally he eat out heseft till he fix heseft an die."

534 We asked about the use of drums.

763 "Yes'm, dey alluz use tuh beat duh drum wen somebody
764 die tuh let duh udduh folks know bout duh det. An at
fewnuls too, dey beat it."

776 Relative to spirits, she replied, "No'm, I caahn see spirits
cuz I ain bawn wid a caul. But now Bob Delegal he knows
spirits. Down on Blackbeard Ilun, deah wuz a big hawg wut
wuz a ebil spirit. Dey call um Blackbeard an dey try an
try tuh kill um. So ole Bob Delegal cut up some silbuh an
put it in he gun. He aim at duh hawg but he miss um an ole
Bob Delegal fall down an couldn speak. Dey carry um home
an he nebuh did talk no mo an duh nex day he die."

782 According to Sophie the old people on St. Catherines
would pray at the rising and at the setting of the sun and
at the conclusion of their prayers they would say the words
"Meena, Mina, Mo." Asked if she knew the meaning of
these words, she shook her head negatively.

115 "Yuh know, Susie Branch, who lib jis cross duh road
deah, could tell yuh some uh deze tings too. We wuz chillun
tuhgedduh down on St. Catherines Ilun. I gwine call uh."

In a moment Susie* arrived. Tall and thin, she was
dressed in a red, green, and blue cotton plaid skirt and a
man's shirt with the tail hanging loosely outside. She was
very talkative and was enthusiastic in verifying many of the
things that Sophie had mentioned.

115
829 Susie listened gravely as we inquired about her recollec-
tions of the old people in her family. She told us the follow-
ing story: "Dey steal muh great-great-gran, uh name wuz
Sukey, frum off duh beach in Africa wen she wuz a young
miss. I dunno wut paht ub Africa she come frum. She
alluz say she come frum Africa, duh country weah dey dohn
weah no cloze. At duh plantation at St. Catherines she wuz

* Susie Branch, White Bluff.

WHITE BLUFF

789 "Muh gran say ole man Waldburg down on St. Catherine own some slabs wut wuzn climatize an he wuk um hahd an one day dey wuz hoein in duh fiel an duh dribuh come out an two ub um wuz unuh a tree in duh shade, an duh hoes wuz wukin by demsef. Duh dribuh say 'Wut dis?' an dey say, 'Kum buba yali kum buba tambe, Kum kunka yali kum kunka tambe,' quick like. Den dey rise off duh groun an fly away. Nobody ebuh see um no mo. Some say dey fly back tuh Africa. Muh gran see dat wid he own eye."

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782 He had heard that on Blackbeard Island it was customary in the old days for a group of men to agree upon a location in which to bury their money, whereupon one of them would voluntarily offer his life and be put to death at the hands of the others, thereby enabling his spirit to stand guard and protect the treasure.

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• 776
787 "I seen a spirit muhsef once wen I wuz a young man," Prince continued. "It wuz late in duh aftuhnoon. I wuz cookin crab an uh look up an see a man widout a head. I look away, den uh look back tuh weah uh see im, an sho nuff deah he is in plain sight. I rush tuh duh house an staht tuh tell muh fostuh mudduh but she stop me. She dohn wahn me tuh talk bout it. Den duh nex day she ax me wut uh see an fix me sumpm tuh drink an I nebul did see no mo spirit."

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[115] Another woman in the community, Bessie Royal,* in relation to her belief in witchcraft and conjure said, "Lots uh people roun yuh say dat hags ride um at night."⁶⁸ None uh um ebuh bodduded me. Dey say dat duh hags is libe folks wut hab duh powuh tuh change demsefs intuh animals an insecs an any udduh ting dey want tuh be."⁶⁹

"I dohn know how it wuz done but muh faduh wuz cunjuh¹⁵ by a suttn uhmun dat wuz said to be a hag."⁶⁹ He go crazy sometimes an ack lak he wuz sked by sumpm chasin im. He git wus and dey take im tuh a root-doctuh. Duh root doctuh say he wuz cunjuh¹⁵. He hab us ketch a wite chicken

• Bessie Royal, White Bluff.

DRUMS AND SHADOWS

538 "Spiduh stories mus be bad. Caahn git duh mens tuh tell um tuh dis day. Dey jis say dey ain know nuttn bout um. Dey ain want tuh tell um tuh duh ladies."

(115) Gene,* Uncle Jack's stalwart son, who had for the most part stood quietly at the fringe of the little group and had volunteered no information at all, now contributed, "Doze spiduh stories ain nuttn but duhty jokes. Dat's all dey is. Yuh call a duhty joke 'An Nancy story.' Ain no-stories tuh tell duh ladies."³³

789 A sudden silence followed and we asked if any of the
567 group had heard of flying Africans. Uncle Jack's face
829 brightened. "Long as I kin membuh, missus, I been heahin bout dat. Lots uh slaves wut wuz brung obuh frum Africa could fly. Deah wuz a crowd uh um wukin in duh fiel. Dey dohn lak it heah an dey tink dey go back tuh Africa. One by one dey fly up in duh eah an all fly off an gone back tuh Africa."

789 As the old man was talking, the others nodded in agree-
ment and mumbled that they too had heard of "folks wut
(115) could fly." Peter McQueen,** small and middle-aged, said, "Deah's folks wut kin fly eben now. Folks is alluz complainin bout bein rid by witches."³⁴

754 There was again a murmur of agreement and we were able to catch snatches of conversation dealing with people in the neighborhood who had been ridden by witches.

Celia Small told us, "Dey's mosly folks yuh know. Jis change deah shape at night an come in duh house an ride yuh."³⁵

"Now das sumpm reel," approved Uncle Robert. "I bin rid lots uh time by witches. Jis sit on yuh ches an ride yuh. Yuh wake up an feel lak yuh smudduhin. Ef yuh kin git duh succulation an tro um off, it all right."

The talk of witches suggested other apparitions and we

• 775
776 * Gene Tattnell, Wilmington Island.

** Peter McQueen, Wilmington Island.

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WILMINGTON ISLAND

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776 were informed that a variety of spirits were said to be seen on the island. These, it seemed, took different sizes and shapes and frequently appeared to the local residents.^{54, 55, 56}

"Sometimes," said Celia, "doze spirits put spells on yuh, fix yuh."

754 "Spirits ain duh only ones," added Peter McQueen. "Folks kin wuk wid cunjuh too.¹⁸ Ain dasso, Uncle Robert?"

"Dasso," Uncle Robert nodded sagely. "Muh own brud-duh wuz cunjuhed. He hab a spell put on um. He hab fits all duh time—hydrophobical fits—act lak he crazy. Nuttn we do hep im, an attuh a few yeahs he die."

754
789 "Only ting yuh kin do tuh keep frum bein cunjuhed is tuh carry a han," said Peter. "Mos folks tote a han wid um." ^{8, 12, 2, 2, 4}

"Plenty folks kin fix yuh wid a han dey make deysef," said another voice.

754 "What are the charms made of?" we wanted to know.

"Haiah," "Nails," ¹⁰ "Frum duh cloze" were the various responses and Celia enlarged on this information. "Ef yuh hab a enemy, nebuh let um git a piece uh yuh cloze. An yuh bun yuh haiah an yuh nail parins. Dey kin sho make pow-uhful han frum deze."

We inquired if many persons made a profession of this, and Peter informed us, "Sometimes dey git um frum a root doctuh." ^{8a, 2, 40}

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789 "Duh root doctuh kin hep yuh too," added Uncle Robert. "Dey is powful smaht. I use tuh heah tell ub a root man name Smaht McCall.^{6, 48} Ef yuh git in any trouble, yuh jis go see um an he git yuh out ub it. Deah wuz a man wut got rested. He wuz plenty skeah bout wut would happen tuh um. He go see Smaht McCall an Smaht say not tuh worry cuz he would hep um. Duh day uh duh trial come an wen dey try duh case, a buzzud fly in duh cote house win-duh.^{60b} He fly roun. Den he light on duh jedge desk. Well,

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789 I see a man go right down that path theah. I go out tuh see who he wuz an all of a sudden he disappeah. Theah wuzn't no foot tracks aw nuthin. I nevuh see im no mo. I think maybe he wuz gahdin buried treasure.⁸¹

• 776
789 "Anothuh time I look out in the yahd an theah wuz a hawg jis a eatin up the cawn.^{84b} That wuz the biggest hawg I evuh did see. He stand theah an keep eatin an eatin. I run an tell muh huzbun an he drop wut he wuz doin an come runnin. Wen we git theah, the hawg done disappeah. Theah wuzn't no sign of im an the cawn wuz all right theah. It didn't look lak anybody bin eatin on it uhtall.

"Then one time I see a crowd of cows in the field.^{84c} Theah wuz a big bull in the middle. They wuz jis a cuttin down the cawn. Theah wuz a big empty space weah they have already eat. I run tuh weah muh brothuh wuz an tell im tuh come quick. We run weah the cows wuz but wen we git theah, they have all vanished. They wuz all gone. Theah wuz no tracks an all the cawn wuz grown back. All of a sudden I feel a terrible pain. I could hahdly git tuh the house. That's the way it is bout the spirits. Ef yuh tell yuh see em an they disappeah an no one else can see em, then it cause yuh tuh git sick."

(753) After a while Liza remembered an incident that had been related to her by her grandfather and she told us, "Muh gran, he see a deah come down the bluff. He run quick an jump on his back. The deah run all aroun the woods. He teah an scratch an try tuh shake muh gran off. He couldn do it. Finally he run intuh the rivuh. Muh gran jump off an make it tuh the sho. He wuz so tired he wuz mos dead."

Was there no protection against the visits of these creatures from the spirit world, we wanted to know. All of the little group assembled on the porch shook their heads and mumbled a reply.

789
754 "Yes'm, mos of the folks carry sumpm fuh pruhtec-tion,"⁸ said Liza. "These keep othuh folks frum wukin cun-

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754 she declared. "I buns it so nobody kin wuk hahm wid it." ¹⁰
[777] Young Reuben spoke up. "Ef yuh weahs a silvuh coin, it
[789] brings yuh good luck," he stated doggedly. "An ef any body
cunjuh yuh aw wuk gense yuh, duh money tun black an yuh
know yuh hab tuh do sumpm bout it fo duh cunjuh
wuks." ^{12a, c, d}

"Did you ever see anyone who was conjured?" we asked.
All three nodded solemnly.

Uncle Ben spoke first. "Dey's mosly all crippled up an
caahn moob bout. Ef dey dohn do nuttn, duh cunjuh gits
wus an dey dies." ¹³

[753] "Folks wut is cunjuhed hab snakes in em an sometimes
[825] frawgs.⁵ Yuh kin see em moobin roun in deah bodies," vol-
[759] unteered Reuben. "Wen dey visit duh root doctuh ⁴⁸ an he
wuks obuh em, den dey's jis as good as noo."

775 "Some folks roun bout say dey sees spirits," added Uncle
• 776 Ben. "Dey calls em plat-eye, cuz dey hab jis one big eye
hangin out in front.⁶² I dohn fool roun wid sech tings fuh
dey's sho bad luck."

775 "In some places the people told us that dead people's
spirits returned to earth. Is that true here?" we asked.

Aunt Sarah speculated. She wagged her black-bonneted
head until her brass earrings jangled. Finally she offered,
775 "I dohn guess yuh be bodduh much by duh spirits ef yuh
764 gib em a good fewnul ³⁶ an put duh tings wut belong tuh em
on top uh duh grave." ⁴⁷

Uncle Ben helped with this explanation. "Yuh puts all
duh tings wut dey use las, lak duh dishes an duh medicine
bottle. Duh spirits need deze same as duh man. Den duh
spirit res an dohn wanduh bout."

764 Aunt Sarah said that they went to set-ups and that in the
782 old days, after the mourners had arrived, a chicken was
killed. ^{35, 37b, c} Neither Aunt Sarah nor Uncle Ben, however,
knew the reason for this.

789 Catching sight of a few crudely made farm implements

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D A R I E N

825 yuh all duh time an wistle jis lak a pusson. I dohn fool wid
(777) no spiduh. Dey is bad luck. All duh time dey drop down
right out ub a tree.

725 "I know deah is spirits an ghos cuz I kin see um."⁵⁵ Yuh
781 hab tuh be bawn wid a caul tuh be able tuh see duh spirits.⁴

845 "Some uh duh folks is rid so much by witches dat attuh a
754 time dey git tin an po an jis die."⁵⁶ Wen a witch come in duh
789 house, it hang up duh skin behine duh doe an ef yuh put
salt on duh skin, duh witch caahn put it on agen. Benne
seed is bad fuh duh witch too an keep um way.

754 "Witches take all kine uh shape. Sometime dey lak ani-
(825) mal, sometime lak bud."⁵⁸ In Harris Neck deah wuz a big
buzzud wut use tuh light on duh fence ebry time dey would
be milkin duh cows. Wen duh buzzud would fly off, one uh
duh milk buckets would alluz be dry."⁵⁹ Dis happen ebry
day. Dey would shoot at duh bud but nobody could ebuh
hit it. One man he take a dime an he quawtuh it; den he put
it in duh gun. Duh nex day wen duh buzzud light, he shoot
at it an he hit it in duh wing. It fly off an go down a chim-
bley ub a house. Wen duh men go in duh house, dey fine
a ole uhmun wid uh ahim broke. Dey know den she wuz a
witch. I know deah wuz some talk bout bunnin uh up, but
I dohn tink dey do it."

775 "Ebry night I sit on dis poach heah." He pointed to the
• 776 back porch of the white house. "I kin see duh spirits goin
787 by. Deah is a whole crowd uh lill wite tings. Dey is goin
obuh deah tuh duh spring. Some is lak chillun; some is lak
grown folks. Dey jis go cross duh fiel tuh duh mahble steps
uh duh ole gahden an down duh steps tuh duh fountn. I ain
nebuh bodduh um an dey ain nebuh do me no hahm."

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764 "Yes'm, we hab set-ups wid duh dead, but I ain know bout
(775) killin chicken. At duh fewnul, dey kills hawg an hab ⁴⁰
764 plenty tuh eat.^{37b, c} Duh reason fuh dis is so dat sperrit hab
782 plenty at duh las. Wen fewnul pruhcession gits tuh grabe-
yahd, dey stops. I ain know wy dey do it but dey stops at
duh gate, and dey ax leab tuh come in. Deah ain nobody at
duh gate, but dey alluz ax jis duh same. Dey say, 'Fambly,
we come tuh put our brudduh away in muddul duh. Please
leh us go tru gate.'"⁶⁰

754 About conjure, however, the old woman was not very com-
municative. "I ain know bout cunjuh," she said. "I heahs
bout spells on people, but I ain see um. Now shadduhs, I see
• 776 um. One night comin down duh road, I git tuh place weah
787 road tun, an I heah sumpm behine me runnin long close tuh
groun. He got big long tus, dis long, an he tongue hangin
out. He pas close tuh me, an he look a me. I see um good.
He got long tick haiah lak Noofounlan. Deah ain nebul
bin dog lak um on ilun. He mus be shadduh."⁵⁴

"Den one night, I come frum chuch wid huzbun. We gits
tuh tun, I heahs sumpm agen. I looks, an deah is sumpm
look lak man. Huzbun he ain see um. Den I heahs a
stompin, an sumpm come by so close tuh me I kin mos tech
um, an he tun tuh spotted ox. 'Budge,' I calls um wen dey
changes lak dat. Dat spotted ox go gallopin off, an I say
tuh huzbun, 'Yuh ain see um?' He say, 'Wut?' I say, 'Da
spotted ox wut go pas down duh road an out in da fiel?' He
say, 'I ain see nuttn.' Das wen I luns dat wen yuh see um,
yuh musn talk bout um.

539 "No'm, I dunno no animal stories. I heah um, but I fuh-
gits. I know bout lizzud an rabbit, dough. Yuh ain know
bout lizzud an rabbit? Well, lizzud, he wuk hahd. He hab
sode wut he cut crop wid, an it wuk by itself an it cut so fine,
nuttn lef.³⁹ Lizzud he speak wud tuh it—it do all duh wuk.
Now, rabbit, he smaht. He ain got no sode lak lizzud got
an he wahn one. He hide behine bush, an he watch da sode

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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170 Notes to Pages 4-14

113 surrounding area see Nichols, "Linguistic Change in Gullah"; and Charles Joyner, *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984).

4. BCD Council of Governments, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, 1979, p. 2.

5. Waccamaw Regional Planning and Development Council, *Waccamaw Regional Housing Element*, 1977, p. 8.

6. BCD, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, p. 21.

491
 (505) 7. The residents of Sandy Island have requested a bridge from the local government, but at this writing none is expected in the near future. At present all building materials, appliances, vehicles, and the like must be brought from the mainland by barge. And though residents enjoy the seclusion during the spring and summer, they complain—the children particularly—about being ferried across the river during the freezing rains that frequent the Carolina coast in winter.

113 8. For a discussion of the demographic characteristics of the Sea Island area see Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, vol. 4 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1930); Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect*; Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); and Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1690 through the Stone Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974).

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 775 9. Many hags, ghosts, and spirits are thought to haunt these highways, and some islanders fear them much more than the alligators, wolves, rattlesnakes, and other creatures which may prowl along the swamp roads at night.

113 10. Merrill G. Christophersen, *Biography of an Island* (Fennimore, Wis.: Westburg Assoc., 1976).

162 11. Sandy Island, in Georgetown County, is inhabited entirely by African-Americans. However, some Sea Islands just north of Charleston and closer to the coast, such as Pawleys, Sullivans, and the Isle of Palms, are peopled primarily by whites.

113 12. Marina Wikramanayake, *A World in Shadow: The Free Black in Antebellum South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), pp. 158-59.

13. Jackson, Slaughter, and Blake, "The Sea Islands as a Cultural Resource," p. 33.

113
 567 14. Frederic Bancroft, *Slave Trading in the Old South* (Baltimore: J. J. Furst Co., 1931), pp. 359-60. For further discussion of the slave trade in the Sea Island area see Georgia Writers Project, *Drums and Shadows* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1940; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973) p. xviii; Wood, *Black Majority*; and Joyner, *Down by the Riverside*.

113 15. BCD, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, p. 19.

16. BCD, *Report on Economically Less Developed Areas*, p. 14.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

19. June Manning Thomas, "The Impact of Corporate Tourism on Gullah Blacks: Notes on Issues of Employment," *Phylon* 41, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 4, 5.

20. BCD, *Report on Economically Less Developed Areas*, pp. 13, 17.

21. Thomas, "Impact of Corporate Tourism," p. 6.

22. Quoted in Mason Crum, *Gullah: Negro Life in the Carolina Sea Islands* (Du-

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(771) Their presence keeps the spirit away from the living. The significance of spiritual proximity in brilliance gave rise to the BaKongo custom of lighting bonfires on graves to lead one's soul to another world. Similarly, Gullah torchlight burials may have had a deeper meaning than simply lighting the path. Certainly the presence of lamps on African-American graves indicates that perhaps this was a means of lighting the way to the world beyond, and keeping away the deceased's spirit. Furthermore, the decorations imply the deceased's entrance into the fourth moment, a spiritual existence where all is light and brilliance. Breaking pottery and porcelain was perhaps not done to prevent theft, as some researchers believe, but may indicate the deceased's spiritual release and break with earthly life.²⁵

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823 Another interesting continuity between Gullah and African traditions in regard to burial is the position of the deceased. In Central West Africa, the coffin is placed so that the deceased faces eastward. Folklorist Elsie Parsons noted that Gullah graves were "invariably dug east to west, with the head to the west." Thomas Higginson wrote in his diary of a "very impressive" funeral for two black soldiers in his regiment. Just before the coffins were lowered, "an old man whispered to me that I must have their positions altered,—the heads must be towards the west." Higginson complied without asking why. Gullahs and Africans shared a concept of the cosmos. The world followed the sun from east to west.²⁶

• 776 Sea Island slaves retained a belief in the power of agents of evil and easily included the Christian devil in their hierarchy. Ghosts, hags, plat-eyes, conjurers, and others were all instruments of Satan. At times their faith in God may not have surpassed their fear of the devil.²⁷ On other occasions God could, for the sake of "the faithful," take the role of a conjurer and bring evil instead of good. Although Gullahs believed that Satan and his cohorts were mainly responsible for evil, they also felt that God was sometimes willing to bring evil down upon an adversary of one of His own. In the following illustration, God reportedly used His power in this way. July Brown was a high officer in one of the churches on Edisto Island. When he was interviewed in the 1930s for the Federal Writers Project, he related the story of how he once prayed a man to death:

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I been on de Savannah train goin' to Charleston. My wallet been jam down deep in my hip pocket. Must ob had 'bout twenty dollars in um. Lo and behold when I git to de Union station, I feel in my pocket to git street cyar money, and my wallet done gone! I notice dat when I come out ob de train uh black, shaap face

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988

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nigger been press close to me. I say: "Dats de bery man steal my money." Iquire roun de station and find out who he be. Dey say he uh man from John Island and dey call 'e name to me.

No, I ain't make no 'temp to call de police. Dat man done spend de money anyhow. I jest say: "All right. I goin' to leave yuh wid God."

When I git home, I shet my door and put de whole ting 'fore God. I tell um my trouble and what dat man done 'gainst me. In two week time dat man jest as stiff and cold as uh piece ob iron.²⁸

This may be similar to the power of *nkisi*, essentially a positive force working for the good, to ward off *kindoki*, and thus doing an evil deed. Generally speaking, however, the deity represented forces of good. Gullahs believed in the power of God and saw that power as a form of protection. This may perhaps explain why interviewers for the Federal Writers Project observed that nearly all the doors and windows of Gullah cabins were painted blue, the color of the heavens. One theory was that the custom of painting doors and windows blue was an unconscious holdover from the early days of slavery in the Sea Islands when Gullahs were given the residue from indigo vats to use on the doors and windows of their cabins. However this does not explain the fact that Gullah conjurers concocted pills for their "patients" the color of which was usually blue also. Perhaps then, the shade blue was effective in keeping out "speerits." Spirits were said to be afraid of blue because it reminded them of heaven, hence evil beings could not stand the sight of blue. But the Gullahs themselves would not verify either notion regarding their preference for blue. If asked why they painted their doors and windows blue, Gullahs would smile wryly and say some people "jest lak dat color."²⁹

Thus, while Gullahs turned gratefully to the Christian God, whom they regarded as a warm, personal friend, this did not prevent them from retaining some of their ingrained customs and beliefs, as is observed in their attitudes toward life, death and the supernatural. And, even in the Gullahs' approach toward death, a sense of community prevailed. The ritual was observed with respect and responsibility. There was a feeling of satisfaction that, while the individual had to cross the river alone, the right impetus had been given before the deceased left the earth, and thus the living had done their part by fulfilling their collective obligation for the last time.

A direct relationship appears to exist between the African and Gullah theory of being. In both, God (Jesus for the Gullahs) was the apex,

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988

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THE SOCIORELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

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171 representing honor, constancy, harmony, and perfection, while humanity occupied the center, ever striving to be godlike through a sense of love, community, kinship, and cooperation. In addition, the good and bad of the spirit world existed in both traditions although it was far more complex for Africans than for Gullahs. These beings included superhumans, animals, and objects without biological life.¹⁰ Gullahs applied the African ontology, adapted Christianity and bondage to it, and created a religion that employed spirituality as a means of self-preservation and as a vital component of community life. It is, then, to the 'Gullahs' credit that though circumstances prevented them from rising up against slavery, they did not succumb to white cultural domination. Instead, they successfully rose above many of the negative ingredients of Christianity while assimilating certain other attributes which were synthesized with African culture. In bondage, Gullahs achieved elevation on the level of personal culture and the molding of community values. The edifying qualities of Gullah religious belief must be seen as having contributed much to that achievement, just as an element of truth must be recognized in the assertion that insofar as people develop their own culture they are not slaves.¹¹

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3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988

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APPENDIX D

The Deity

- 776 The Gullahs' concept of the deity was not that of a God of wrath, but
[533] one of love and mercy. In Gullah music, phrases such as "Kind Jesus,"
or "In the mornin' when I rise, tell my Jesus Huddy ho," indicate that
776 for these slaves Christ was a warm personal friend, as well as a fellow
782 sufferer. Similarly, the Gullahs' prayers also express how they viewed
their relationship with God. Prayer was considered actual communica-
tion with Jesus, and He was expected to listen and hopefully answer the
appeal in some way or another. In such verbal expressions the supplica-
tor reveals inner ideas of the deity. In a study done among the Gullahs
in the 1930s, it was observed that by far the most prominent attribute of
the deity in prayers was merciful, being mentioned 189 times as opposed
to a total of 119 times for all the other attributes ranging from loving to
glorious. No description suggesting wrath or vengeance was among the
characteristics attributed to the deity.¹ In the following prayer, recorded
during the Civil War, one is able to observe the Gullahs' poetic imagery,
spirituality, sense of community, and their attitude toward the deity:

Aunt Jane's Prayer

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Der Maussuh Jesus, we all uns beg Ooner (you) come make us a call dis yere
day. We is nuttin' but poor Ethiopian women and people ain't t'ink much 'bout
we. We ain't trust ask any of dem great high people for come to we church, but
do' you is de one great Maussuh, great too much dan Maussuh Linkum, you
ain't shame to care for we African people.

Come to we, dear Maussuh Jesus. De sun, 'he hot too much, de road am dat
long and boggy (sandy) and we ain't got no buggy, for send and fetch Ooner.
But Maussuh, yo' 'member how yo' walked dat hard walk up Calvary and ain't

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988

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weary but t'ink about we all dat way. We know you ain't weary for to come to we. We pick out de torns, de prickles, de brier, de backslidin' and de quarrel and de sin out of yo' path so dey shan't hur Ooner pierce feet no mo'.

Come to we, dear Maussuh Jesus. We all huns ain't got no good cool water for give yo' when yo' t'irsty. You know, Maussuh, de drought so long, and de well so low, ain't nuttin' but mud to drink. But we gine to take de 'munion cup and fill it wid de tear ob repentence and love clean out ob we heart. Dat all we hab to gib yo', good Maussuh.

An' Maussuh Jesus, you say you gwine stand to de door and knock. But you ain't gwine stand at we door, Maussuh, and knock. We sets de door plum open for yo' and watch up de road for see you.

Sisters (turning to the other women in the church), what for you'all ain't open de door so Maussuh know He welcome? (One woman rose quietly from her knees and set the church door wide.)

Come Maussuh Jesus come! We know you is near, we heart is all just tremble, tremble, we so glad for hab yo' here. And Maussuh, we church ain't good 'nuff for yo' to sit down in, but stop by de door jes' one minute, dear Maussuh Jesus, and whisper one word to we heart—one good word—we do listen—Maussuh.²

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be seen, their familiar haunts, the time they have to leave their graves and their time of return. 795

For instance, all ghosts leave the graveyard at twelve midnight and return at "fust fowl crow"—all but one who is left on guard. They walk ten feet high off the ground, and cover long distances at a surprisingly short length of time. They like certain trees and certain houses. They have never been known to attack a human being physically, but are able to scare one to death. [767]

These spirits are the "on-easy" spirits who are destined for hell on judgment day, but who roam the earth and "hant" the living for they have no place to rest themselves. These "ghosts," "speerits", or "hants" fall into the following categories:

Plat-eye—There are a number of beliefs regarding plat-eye. One is that plat-eye is the spirit of some of "those old timey people what been dead a long time." Another is that plat-eyes come into being when one buries a treasure and places the head of a murdered man in the hole with the valuables. If an intruder approaches the spot, the plat-eye will arise out of the ground in the guise of a six-legged calf or headless hog and frighten the trespasser away. 825
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Boo-bags—are spirits of hags. They are sent to plague and pester the enemies of the voodoo practitioner, or the enemies of the conjure man's clients. The spell can only be removed by a charm made by another doctor-nigger or witch who has superior knowledge of black magic. 754
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Boo-daddies—are the spirits of doctor-niggers and conjure men released from the body of the living at night for dread purposes.

Drolls—are the spirits of young children who died a painful death. They can be heard, the Negroes say, crying piteously at night in deep swamps and deserted marshland. 775

Spirit-animals—are numerous. One particularly fearsome cat, which sometimes reaches a height of ten feet and explodes before one's eyes when the Lord's prayer is recited backwards, can be seen at Hamilton Hill on Edisto Island, when the moon is young. b.f.s. 776
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- 776 Conjure-horses and Spirit-bears—have not been heard of since the War between the States. Old-time Negroes say that a conjure-horse could follow a haunted person for miles, traveling well over the tree tops all the way. They breathed fire out of their nostrils, and when they passed by, the sound of hooves beating against some ghostly substance filled the air. Spirit-bears had long shaggy black hair, and mouths like caverns from which enormous red tongues, dripping with blood, protruded. They could climb the tallest tree on Edisto.

LETTERED REFERENCES

- 000 ^aThe Kuranko also believe that such places as the bush, rivers, and mountains are the domain of the "Nyenne" spirits. The nyenne are quasi-humans, some of whom are sympathetic toward humans while others are harmful. Certain individuals are reputed to have special gifts of vision that enable them to see and make contact with the nyenne and even to secure their help in some undertaking. Similarly, the Limba believe that the bush is the domain of a group of spirits who cannot be seen except by those people who are born with "double eyes" or a special "clear spiritual vision." Michael Jackson, *The Kuranko: Dimensions of Social Reality in a West African Society* (London: C. Hurst, 1977), 34-35; Ruth Finnegan, *Limba Stories and Story Telling* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 22.

^bAmong the Kuranko of Sierra Leone, there is a belief that certain people have the power of transforming themselves into animals in order to harm others. These "shape shifters" are greatly feared and embody all of the anti-social behavior which the Kuranko people try to combat. See Jackson, *The Kuranko*, 22.

^cIn African society, certain men are considered very proficient in the curative art. They are said to have more power over spirits than others have and do not necessarily use this power for positive ends. They can heal, foretell the future, and "change a thing into something else or a man into a lower animal, or a tree or anything." Their medicine is said to consist of charms, grasses, herbs, and barks taken from the bush. It is the spirit dwelling within these men which gives them their power. The Africans say that without the spirit these "magicians," "healers," and "fortune tellers" could do nothing. Allen Wolsey, *The Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, Their Customs, Religion and Folklore*

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988

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that the old preacher got away from there so fast that he, who was also running with all his strength—couldn't keep him in sight.

At least this story had its explanation. The next day the old preacher and the young man were told that two Negroes after a fishing trip had stopped under a tree in the cemetery to divide their fish. One had a sack full of fish. The other had only two which he had dropped on the ground as he opened the gate of the cemetery.

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Truss Gawd

"Plat Eye? Yas'm. De ole folks is talk about Plat Eye. Dey say dey takes shape ob all kind de critter—dawg, cat, hawg, mule, varmint—and I is hear tell ob Plat Eye taking form of gator. I ain see dem scusing one leetle time. You know dat leetle swampy place hind de Parsenage? Dem does call dat Parsenage Branch. Well, one time I hab meh bloom on me en wuz clamming dem days, en de tide been berry late in de ebenin. Hit wuz dusky dark when I hit de Parsenage Lane—light dusky dark. I wuzn't feared none tall. You see, ez I say, I hab meh bloom on me in dem days. En I pass de Cap'n barn en stable. Dere he wuz wid Allan son milkin. En I say: "Good even, Cap'n Bill!" En he gin me back meh word. En I bawg t'ru dat deep white san en I passes de graveyard entrance en I leabes de [gate] open en enters dem dark woods whey de moss wabe low en bresh in you face. En I bin think about Plat Eye. De mind come ter me it wuz good time ter meet em.

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"Den I bresh dem weepin moss aside en I trabble de wet mud in meh bare feets en meh shoe bein tie ter meh girdle string. En, Miss Jin, when I bin come ter de foot lawg I could see same ez I see yo now. I could see de foot lawg—dat same old cypress what been dere now. He blow in dat las big September gale. En I bin see Mr. Bull Frawg hit de water—ker plunk! En a cooter slide offen de lawg at meh feets. En, Miss Jin, clare ter Gawd, I bin fer look up at dat cooter den I turn meh eye up en dere wuz a cat—black cat wid he eye lak balls ob fire en he back all arch up en he tail twissin en er switchin en he hair stan on end. He move backward front ob me cross dat cypress lawg. En he bin big. He bin large es meh leetle yearlin ox. En I talk ter em en try fer draw close. En I say ter'em; 'I ain fer fear nuttin!'

"En I'ae try fer sing: 'He carry me t'ru many ob danger. Because he fust lub me. He guard gainst hant en Plat Eye. Because he fust lub me!'

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988

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APPENDIX E

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"En dat Plat Eye ain gib me back meh word. He mobe forward en he tail swish en swish same lak big moccasin tail when he lash de rushes. En de sound come to me; 'Child ob Gawd, doan you show no fear.'

"En I is brace up. En meh short-handle leetle clamrake been in meh hand en I sing:

'Gawd will take care ob me.
Walkin t'ru many ob dangers,
Gawd will take care ob me.'

"En den de min come ter me; 'De Lawd heps dem what heps demsef.' Den I raise up meh rake en I come right cross dat critter hed. Ef dat had bin real cat, I'd er pin him ter dat lawg. My rake bin bury deep en de lawg hold em. En I clare ter Gawd, Miss Jin, he up en prance right onder meh feets, dem eyes burnin holes in me en he tail swish-swish lak ole Sooky tail when de flies bad. En meh ire bin raise. I fer struggle wid meh rake en de lawg loose em he grip en I fer pray: 'Gib Addie Strength, O Gawd!'

"En down I come straight t'ru dat critter middle. He stummick ball up same lak de leetle puffer toad-fish. But dat critter ain feel meh lick. En I ressel lak Jacob wid de angel. I bin strong en hab meh bloom on me. It ain 'vail nuttin.

"No, man! Mr. Plat Eye jest es peart en frisky ez fore he bin hit. En I buse em en I cuss em en I say: 'You debbil! Clare meh path!'

"En ef dat critter didn't paw de air en jest raise up dat big bamboo vine, en meh fer hit em ebery jump! So, Miss Jin, I tink: 'Sinner leble dat lawg.' Meh mind come ter me: 'Child ob Gawd, trabbel de woods path!'

"En I turn back en meh haste. En I hit dat path. En I ain bin tarry en jest ez I wuz gibbin Gawd he praise fer deliver me, dere dat cat! Dis time he big ez meh middle-size ox, en he eye bin blaze! En I lam en I lam. En dat rake handle bin wire en bin nail on. En jest ez I mek meh las lam, dat critter raise up fore meh eyes, en dis time he bin big ez cousin Andrew full-grown ox. En he vanish up dat ole boxed pine ez you quits de woods. Yas'm. I ain bleeve in Plat Eye twill den, but I minds meh step since dem days.

"En when I trabbles de deep woods whey de moss wabe low en Mr. Cooter lib en Mr. Moccasin crawl in de firefly flicker—meh packet fer load.

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988

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"Yas'm. I'm ready fer em. Gunpowder en sulphur. Dey is say Plat Eye can't stan dem smell mix. No'm. Dey ain fer trubble me sense dat one time. Uncle Murphy he witch doctor, en he bin tell me how fer fend em off. Dat man full ob knowledge. He must hap Gawd mind in em. So I totes meh powder en sulphur en I carries stick in meh han en puts meh truss in Gawd."

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[p. 354 is blank]

Mrs. Janie Hunter

WHEN YOU GET TO OLD AGE YOU TURN A HAG

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I say see it to believe it. Ghosts shows up to some people, and some people they don't. But I'm not scared of 'em. I'm more scared of live.

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But hags, that's real. When you get to old age, you turn a hag. Hags come to your house and hag your children. Children can't sleep, or a hag take somebody child and put 'em under the bed. Sometime a hag sit on you and keep you from getting up, try to smother you.

But you could tell a hag. I heard my old people say, if you want to tell a hag, put a broom 'cross your door. If that's a hag, he going take up that broom, ain't going step across it.

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If hag bother you, use salt and pepper. Sprinkle either by your bed or 'cross your door and they won't come in. The salt burn their skin.

Mrs. Mary Pinckney

I GOT A BLUESY FEELING

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I like blues. My uncles Benji and Willis—oh, they could sing! Willis is come home 'round twelve and one o'clock in the night and wake up everybody on the hill. Go one side by the pump and he sing that blues from then 'til four in the morning. Wake up everybody. Mama is come outside, say, "Willis, why don't you come on in the house?"

"Can't come in the house right now, Doll, I got a bluesy feeling." He sing.

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And Benji, Benji could sing! He have one them cowhorn and he get up and put it to his mouth and blow 'em. Just like a trumpet. And Willis sing the song and he be blowing the horn and they going down the hill blowing and singing. And I be right there listening to 'em. I follow them. They is like for I follow them 'cause I sing right along with them.

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My brothers sing blues too. Joe, he like all different kind of song—spiritual and blues. Sometime he be home by heself and go on the road or stay on that porch or go under a tree, sit down and just play his guitar and sing his song. And I'll go and help him.

7: Jackson L-5 (1973-1976) 1989

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19 speakers other than those consulted for the pronominal count. Similarly, *he own* and *she own* are often heard and were recorded by Turner (1949) and Cunningham (1970).

193 11. The neuter possessive pronouns are excluded from
128 this analysis because they occurred too infrequently in the data. Nichols (1976) also notes the infrequency with which they appeared in her study.

19 12. Hancock's word list supplies most of the means for comparison of words in the Atlantic creoles unless specified otherwise. (Hancock 1970:7-72).

194 13. The selection of a rounded or unrounded variant of /o/ has not yet been associated with factors of style, sex, age or other variables.

539 14. *lag* has an unusual meaning for the Islanders.
• 776 It can mean a person, man or woman, dead or alive. For
775 this narrative, it is used to refer to a haunted house—
a house inhabited by spirits or one living person with
unusual powers.

115 15. This consultant's speech exemplifies the system
193 of rule changes discussed earlier. He consistently uses
539 the English past tense marker along with the Creole
was *bin*. The fact that *was* is FOLLOWED by *bin* is an indication that the Creole form is the self-correction and that the speaker relies more heavily on the Creole form to make himself understood.

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942

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Georgia

St. Simon's Island

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764 her master, Thomas Dabney, who was born in 1798. Grannie had been given to him by his mother with the words: "You can trust her in everything." When he went to Mississippi she went along with his other slaves, but apparently the journey was too hard, and Grannie died soon after their arrival. "The master himself led the funeral procession, and all his children followed the coffin as mourners. He ordered out the whole plantation, every one who could walk, and every man, woman, and child carried a torch. The sound of the funeral hymn and the blazing of the many torches, as we wound down the road to the dark shades of the burying-ground, made a painful impression on me as a child and caused many a secret tear." In her *Journal* Fanny Kemble describes another night funeral on Butler's Island, to which she reacted in a similar manner—except that she did not shed her tears in private.

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171 In describing an African burial, Mungo Park mentions that the body is dressed in white cotton, wrapped in a mat, and then "carried to the grave in the dusk of the evening, by the relations." From this I am led to believe that the custom may have originated in Africa. Further evidence to support such a view is furnished by Monroe M. Work, who says, in an article in the *Southern Workman* (1907), that it was an old Hamarian practice to bury the dead in the dark. It may be that our

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(175) Negroes carried out some such traditional observance when they threw their pine torches beside the grave and went back without them. We know the belief in spirits is strong, and it is possible that in this way the spirit of the dead man was prevented from following the living to their homes. Be that as it may, the pine torches were never removed, and the nearest I have come to an explanation of why they were left was given me by Katie Brown: They belonged to the dead. You must not take away a thing that is theirs. If, at the burial, a button falls to the ground from your dress, you must not pick it up. Bad luck follows you if you do.²⁸

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775 A nephew of Katie's gave me an instance of what happened to a Sapelo colored man he knows, who helped clean up the graveyard. After he had put the brush in piles to burn, he thriftily changed his mind and brought in his ox and cart to carry it away. Instead, he had to back his "team" into the fence and leave in a hurry when attacked by an immense dog—as big as a yearling calf—that had never before been

(175) ²⁸ If you start to do something for the dead—whatever it is—you must carry it through. Laura never reached the grave of her son with the flowers she had apparently gathered for it, and in a few months she died in an asylum. The headstone carved out of the marble top of a washstand by young Aaron for his father's grave is still in the Cabin. He has been in serious trouble ever since he left it there.

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942

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Georgia

St. Simon's Island

African Survivals on the Coast of Georgia

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[175] seen on the island. Later he returned with three men to get his ox. This time the dog did not appear—but the cart went back empty.

In the Sapelo burying ground I have seen many evidences of the African custom of placing useful articles on the tops of graves. The Negroes generally say they are for ornamentation, but on Sapelo I was told that the alarm clocks—of which there were many—are for the purpose of waking the dead at Doomsday. At the Petersburg graveyard, lamps and electric-light bulbs are as popular as cups and pitchers.

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171 Work also tells us in the above-mentioned article that "Among the Zulus, pottery is broken by the widow over the grave," ²⁷ and René Maran, in *Batouala*, speaks of the same custom, specifying that the dead man's pots are placed upon his clothing. With his easy chair on top of everything, he is prepared for living the life of the dead. The pictures that accompany an article on "Fetishism in Congo Land" ²⁸ by E. J. Glave, one of Stanley's pioneer officers, give positive proof of the origin of the custom. One, portraying the grave of a Congo Chieftain, shows the same type of decoration that is in use among our Southern rural Negroes. In addition, the author gives a picture of a distorted "charm root" which explains the use of eccentric wood growths in the decoration of the Negro graveyard at Sunbury. Headstones like the cement work found in the Sunbury yard, are a modern innovation. Mungo Park tells us that he "never observed that any stone was placed over the grave, as a monument or memorial." The noticeable lack of interest displayed by our Negroes in providing any sort of marker for their dead, other than a couple of stakes which soon disappear, may be accounted for in this way.

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[764] The custom observed by the men, in walking apart from the women, to a baptism and to a "buryin'," is apparently based on an African tradition. Maran tells us: "It is not right to walk side by side. A custom as old as the Negro, dictated single file." To this day older members of the race walk single file—the men in front. In the old-time funeral processions the women and children followed the men, or else walked on the opposite side of the road—now they ride in automobiles. In many Negro churches the men sit on the left side, the women on the right. ²⁹

²⁷ Our Southern Indians made holes in the bottom of the pots they put in graves, so that the spirit of the pot could accompany the spirit of the dead man to the other world.

²⁸ Century, April, 1901.

²⁹ In the Friends Meeting I attended in my youth, the women sat on the left side of the meeting-house and the men on the right.

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beliefs of the Southern Negroes as a whole. Indeed, they have actually ceased to take seriously many of the old-time superstitions because of the influence which Penn School has had. Undoubtedly there are still some people who patronize "root doctors" or "cunjuh men," in order to procure charms of various sorts and to get "spells" or "voodoo" put on their enemies. There are also some who actually use the folk remedies for various ills, and there are some who plant crops and kill hogs according to lunar phases. But the general status of the island culture as far as superstition is concerned is not very far below the level of the more backward white groups in this country. A surprisingly large proportion of the Negro folk beliefs found in the South is of European descent, and this holds true for the beliefs of the St. Helena Island Negroes.

Following are some of the traditional folk beliefs which seem to be actually practiced to some extent. Midwives, without the patient's knowledge, sometimes put a hoe or plow point or an ax under the bed to cut the after-pains attending child-birth. It is also thought that if the patient will drink tea made from gizzard which has been dried and powdered, or tea made from the nest of the mud dauber, the after-pains will be reduced. Most families try to pay the midwife promptly for her services, for it is believed that failure to pay may cause her eyes, or even her mind, to be affected. Sometimes a Bible or a broom may be seen lying on the pillow above the head of a sick person. This is supposed to prevent the spirits from taking the person away. Mrs. King, the community nurse, stated that she has occasionally had to combat the use of such remedies as cow excreta and vinegar heated for boils,

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